



Diocese of St. Petersburg

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Disciplinary Procedures

Crib Sheet

Number 6

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On rare occasions there may be a need to deal seriously with an employee who is experiencing a performance problem or is just not in sync with the direction of the organization. Hopefully, if all the other methods of performance management are in place and the employer hired "properly", there would be no cause for discipline. Once in a while, though, problems do occur. Problem behavior is often difficult to deal with and to help in situations like these; the Diocese has designed a "Constructive Discipline and Counseling System". The system consists of four, relatively simple, steps and is intended to turn a negative situation into a positive. It is always hoped that the system will correct the problem well before dismissal becomes necessary.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The employee handbook for diocesan entities provides the following process for dealing with unacceptable work behaviors. The corrective process is intended to assist employees who are experiencing a job performance problem or who are demonstrating behavior, which is disruptive to the operations of the diocese, parish, school or early childhood center. Utilizing the following process will give employees both time and guidance in correcting work-related performance concerns.

a. Verbal Counseling

The first step requires the supervisor to meet with the employee, identify and discuss the concerns, and then involve the employee in identifying ways to correct these concerns. A time frame for improvement is to be established and agreed upon between the supervisor and the employee.

b. Written Warning

If the concern is not resolved within that time frame outlined in the performance discussion, a second meeting is to be called. In this meeting, the supervisor is to focus on the concerns and describe the significance of the issues and the consequences of insufficient improvement. Such consequences may include probation or termination. The supervisor will then prepare a statement summarizing the discussion. Both the supervisor and employee will sign this as the "written disciplinary statement". The employee signs it to signify that he/she has read and does understand the statement. If the employee declines to sign the statement, the supervisor will so indicate. The statement will include a place for employee response and will indicate that if the employee disagrees with the assessment, he/she has access to the disputes and grievance resolutions process. If the performance

concern is sufficiently improved within the guidelines established during this meeting, a statement indicating that corrective actions have been taken will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

c. Disciplinary Leave

When the steps outlined above fail to correct the performance issue, the supervisor may place the employee on a one-day paid "decision-making leave". The leave is implemented by the supervisor meeting with the employee on the morning of the leave day. During this meeting, the situation is reviewed again and the employee is instructed to return on the following day with a decision either to correct the problem behavior and continue in the position or to resign his/her position. Upon returning the next day, the employee informs the supervisor of his/her decision. If the decision is to stay, the employee is placed on probationary status and the following procedures are followed.

d. Probationary Status

In the formal probation process, the supervisor may set specific goals, develop an action plan, and set timelines to change the problem behaviors and improve performance. A probation meeting is initiated and a detailed improvement strategy is outlined. At the end of the meeting, the supervisor may prepare a written statement, summarizing the employee's performance improvement plan and attach it to the Constructive Discipline form. The employee and supervisor will sign the statement. A copy of the form and the signed statement will be placed in the employee's personnel file. The probation period may be extended, if necessary. The employee may be dismissed, transferred or demoted during or at the end of this period if there is no satisfactory improvement.

e. Follow-up Procedures

At the end of the probation period, if performance has improved sufficiently, probation discontinues. A statement noting the improvement should be placed in the employee's personnel file. If the improvement has not been sufficient, either probation is extended for another time period or employment is terminated.

If similar problems recur after probation is discontinued, the employee should be given a written warning to immediately correct the situation or to have his/her employment terminated within a specific time period.